

Amendments To the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any cancelled claims at a later date.

1.-15. (cancelled)

16. (new) A method for providing absence information in a telecommunication system having a plurality of subscribers, the method comprising:

creating and acquiring the absence information regarding a first subscriber at a first terminal assigned to the first subscriber;

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber to a switching node of the telecommunication system and storing the absence information in the switching node; and

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber to a second terminal assigned to a second subscriber, such that the absence information is permanently available at the second terminal, wherein

the “absence text” and “station guarding” service features of the telecommunication system are used when creating and storing the absence information.

17. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending a current absence information regarding the first subscriber to the second terminal by the switching node.

18. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending a current absence information regarding the first subscriber to the second terminal by the switching node at specified time intervals.

19. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising:

sending a request message to the switching node by the second terminal; and, after receiving the request message,

sending the absence information regarding the first subscriber to the second terminal by the switching node if the absence information has changed.

20. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber is automatically acquired at the first terminal.

21. (new) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber is automatically acquired at the first terminal.

22. (new) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber is automatically acquired at the first terminal.

23. (new) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the absence information regarding the first subscriber is automatically acquired at the first terminal.

24. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information which has been sent is displayed on a display of the second terminal.

25. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the absence information is stored in the second terminal.

26. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein further service features of the telecommunication system are used for creating and storing the absence information.

27. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein a plurality of first terminals send relevant absence information to the switching node, and that a subscriber list which includes the corresponding first subscribers can be defined at the second terminal.

28. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein the switching node sends the absence information to a plurality of second terminals.

29. (new) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein absence information regarding at least one external subscriber is additionally provided, said external subscriber not being assigned to the telecommunication system, but having an assigned external terminal and being connected to the telecommunication system via a network.

30. (new) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the network is the Internet.

31. (new) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein a first assignment table is used for transforming the absence information regarding the external subscriber from an absence information format of the external terminal into an absence information format of the telecommunication system.

32. (new) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein a second assignment table is used for transforming the absence information from the absence information format of the telecommunication system into the absence information format of the external terminal.

33. (new) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein standard protocols are used for sending the absence information between terminals of the telecommunication system and the external terminal.

34. (new) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) is used as a standard protocol for sending the absence information between terminals of the telecommunication system and the external terminal.

35. (new) A use of a telecommunication system comprising "absence text" and "station guarding" service features for providing absence information, wherein the telecommunication system is adapted to perform the method as claimed in claim 16.